

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

**Please amend claims 1, 3, 7, 10, 11, 17 and 21 as set forth below:**

1. (Currently Amended) A bed rail and bed end assembly for a multiple bed unit, comprising:  
an elongate bed rail; and  
~~a bed end affixed to a side of said bed rail, said bed end including a pair of spaced, substantially vertical posts affixed to a side of the bed rail;~~  
~~each of said posts including a rail connector for receiving a rail of another bed at an elevation substantially the same as said elongate bed rail.~~
2. (Original) The bed rail and bed end assembly of claim 1, wherein said bed end includes at least one cross-piece extending between and connecting said pair of substantially vertical posts.
3. (Currently Amended) A bed rail and bed end assembly for a multiple bed unit, comprising:  
an elongate bed rail with opposed first and second ends;  
a hook plate affixed to said bed rail proximate said first end;  
a hook plate affixed to said bed rail proximate said second end; and  
a bed end including a pair of spaced, substantially vertical posts affixed to a side of the bed rail and at least one cross-piece extending between and connecting said vertical posts;  
each of said posts including a rail connector for receiving a rail of another bed. ~~The bed rail and bed assembly of claim 1, wherein said elongate bed rail includes opposed first and second ends, a hook plate affixed to said bed rail proximate said first end and a hook plate affixed to said bed rail proximate said second end.~~
4. (Original) The bed rail and bed end assembly of claim 3, wherein said bed rail has opposed sides and said pair of vertical posts are affixed to one side and said hook plates are affixed to the other side.

5. (Original) The bed rail and bed end assembly of claim 4, further comprising a deck support lip affixed to the other side of said bed rail.

6. (Original) The bed rail and bed end assembly of claim 5, wherein said deck support lip overlies said hook plates of said bed rail.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of assembling a bed rail and bed end assembly for use with a multiple bed unit, comprising:

providing an elongate bed rail;

providing a bed end having a pair of spaced, substantially vertical posts, each of said posts including a rail connector for receiving a rail of another bed at an elevation substantially the same as said elongate bed rail; and

affixing each of said posts to a side of said bed rail such that said rail connector of each of said posts faces away from said side of the bed rail.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

providing a pair of hook plates; and

affixing said hook plates to a second side of said bed rail opposite said side.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising:

providing a deck support lip; and

affixing said deck support lip to said second side of said bed rail.

10. (Currently Amended) A multiple bed unit, comprising:

a first bed having a pair of bed ends, a side rail connected between and supported by said bed ends, and a sub-assembly connected between and supported by said bed ends;

said sub-assembly including a bed rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the bed rail; and

a second bed having a bed end and at least one side rail connected between the bed end of said second bed and the bed end of the sub-assembly of said first bed with said side rail of said second bed at substantially the same elevation as said bed rail of said sub-assembly.

11. (Currently Amended) A multiple bed unit, comprising:

a first bed having a pair of bed ends, a side rail connected between and supported by said bed ends, and a sub-assembly connected between and supported by said bed ends;  
said sub-assembly including a bed rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the bed rail;  
a second bed having a bed end and at least one side rail connected between the bed end of said second bed and the bed end of the sub-assembly of said first bed; The multiple bed unit of claim 10, further comprising:

a second pair of bed ends disposed below said first pair of bed ends to elevate said first bed; and

another bed end disposed below said bed end of said second bed to elevate said second bed.

12. (Original) The multiple bed unit of claim 11, wherein said first bed includes a pair of guard rails disposed between the bed ends thereof.

13. (Original) The multiple bed unit of claim 12, wherein said first and second beds are disposed substantially at right angles to one another.

14. (Original) A multiple bed unit, comprising:

a first pair of bed ends having a sub-assembly connected between and supported by said bed ends;

said sub-assembly including a bed rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the bed rail;

a first bed having a second pair of bed ends disposed below said first pair of bed ends and a pair of side rails connected between and supported by said bed ends;

a second bed having a bed end and at least one side rail connected between and supported by the bed end of said second bed and the bed end of the sub-assembly; and

another bed end disposed below said bed end of said second bed to elevate said second bed.

15. (Original) The multiple bed unit of claim 14, wherein said sub-assembly is disposed such that said second bed is elevated above and overlaps said first bed.

16. (Original) The multiple bed unit of claim 15, wherein said first and second beds are disposed substantially at right angles to one another.

17. (Currently Amended) A method of assembling a multiple bed unit, comprising:

providing a first pair of bed ends, a side rail and a sub-assembly, said sub-assembly including a rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the rail;

connecting said side rail and sub-assembly to said first pair of bed ends to extend between said bed ends to form a first bed;

providing a third bed end and at least one side rail; and

connecting said at least one side rail to said third bed end and to said bed end of said sub-assembly at an elevation substantially the same as said rail of said sub-assembly to form a second bed.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising:

providing a second pair of bed ends and another bed end;

disposing said second pair of bed ends below said first pair of bed ends to elevate said first bed; and

disposing said another bed end below said third bed end to elevate said second bed.

19. (Original) A method of assembling a multiple bed unit, comprising:

providing a first pair of bed ends and a sub-assembly, said sub-assembly including a rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the rail;

connecting said sub-assembly to said first pair of bed ends to extend between said bed ends;

providing a second pair of bed ends and a pair of side rails;

disposing said second pair of bed ends below said first pair of bed ends and connecting said pair of side rails between said second pair of bed ends to form a first bed;

providing a fifth bed end and at least one side rail;

connecting the at least one side rail between said fifth bed end and the bed end of said sub-assembly to form a second bed;

providing a sixth bed end; and

disposing said sixth bed end below said fifth bed end of said second bed to elevate said second bed.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein said sub-assembly is disposed such that said second bed is elevated above and overlaps said first bed.

21. (Currently Amended) A bed unit, comprising:

a first pair of bed ends having a sub-assembly connected between and supported by said bed ends;

said sub-assembly including a bed rail and a bed end affixed to a side of the bed rail; and a bed having a first bed end and at least one side rail connected between and supported by the first bed end and the bed end of the sub-assembly with said side rail and said bed rail at substantially the same elevation.

22. (Original) The bed rail and bed end assembly of claim 4, wherein at least one of said posts is affixed by a fastener to said bed rail proximate one of said first and second ends, and at least one of said hook plates of said bed rail overlies said fastener.